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Housekeepers' Chat

Friday, December 7, 1928.

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

Subject: "Toys to Fit the Child." Program based on "The Right Toy for the Right Child," by Nell Boyd Taylor, in Journal of the American Association for University Women, October, 1928. Menu and recipes from Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. D. A.

Bulletin available: "Lamb As You Like It."

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"What shall we buy two-year-old Dicky for Christmas?"

"An electric train," suggests Dicky's father. "Saw one today. Furnished complete, with station, switches, tunnel, and side tracks. Wanted to run it myself!"

"So!" says Dicky's mother. "You want an electric train for Christmas! You would have lots of fun turning the electric current off and on, and switching the train back and forth. But where does Dicky come in?"

"Dicky could watch me run it," explains the young father. "Wouldn't he enjoy that?"

"Not for long," says Dicky's mother. "After you had pulled him off the track several times, and warned him not to touch the train, he would lose interest. He's too young for electric and mechanical toys. A two-year-old is more interested in playthings he himself can make go, than in those controlled by electric switches. For the young child, these electric and mechanical playthings are called do-nothing toys, because they afford him little or no chance for physical activity."

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Dicky's mother was right. She knew that her small son needed toys which would give him the satisfaction of doing things for himself.

Nell Boyd Taylor, who was formerly a critic teacher in the kindergarten department of one of our normal schools, has made a list of the toys which have an educative value at different periods, before the child starts to school.

First, she takes up toys for the infant in the crib. For him, we want toys which help in the development of the large muscles of the arm, leg, and back, and those which catch the eye and the ear. At this period the baby is gaining control of the big muscles of his body, and learning to recognize and repeat sounds which he hears. Colored balls and ribbons, fastened to the side of his crib, will



attract his attention, and stimulate the reaching out to grasp them. He must have something to shake, too, like small bells, rattles, and large colored wooden beads, on a string. Other suitable toys for the infant are rubber and stuffed animals, and colored worsted balls.

When the baby is crawling, and learning to walk, he needs such toys as balls for rolling on the floor, a small kiddie-kar, a rocking chair, a few large, round-cornered, washable blocks, and toys for pulling and pushing around the floor. All of these will develop the large muscles.

Between one and two years, when he still needs toys which offer muscular development, he should have more toys of this kind. In this class are a small wagon or wooden train with string for pulling, other pulling and pushing toys, a low swing, baby slide, sand box with pail and pans, small rag doll and carriage, a strong chair his own size, more washable blocks with rounded corners, a few linen books, with good pictures, large, and artistically colored. Especiallly, he needs play space in fresh air and sunshine, preferably a play yard.

When he reaches the age of two, he is old enough to have such toys as a balance board, rocking horse, velocipede, a larger kiddie-kar, wagon, wooden train, large blocks of different sizes, cubes, and oblong blocks, which encourage stooping, lifting, and carrying.

During the next period, from two to four years, he is interested in how things are put together, whether they can be taken apart, how they feel, how they sound when dropped. Suitable toys for the two-to-four year period include balls of different sizes, a work bench with hammer, nails, and pieces of thin board, blunt scissors and newspaper, crayons, paints, large brushes, clay, and blocks. The child can experiment with all these things. Story books and toys for dramatization -- unbreakable dolls, toy furniture, and toy dishes, are also valuable.

For the period from four to six years, there are swings, horizontal bars, rings, seesaws, slides, jumping ropes, hoops, footballs, skates, and bean bags. More blocks, and pieces of thin light board for roofs, should be added to the child's building equipment. The tools of the work bench should now include a real saw, of suitable size. Sewing materials, and small but real cooking utensils are valuable for the child of this age.

There's another thing we must not forget -- and that is a box of such materials as empty cracker and oatmeal boxes, milk bottle tops, corks, cord, sticks of different lengths, and pieces of cloth. A small can of glue, with a stick for spreading, and needle and thread, will also be useful as soon as the child has learned to use them.

Of course there should be much outdoor play in the sunshine. A waterproof box, or a covered porch, will protect playthings from the weather. Every child should have a play space of his very own, where he can keep his playthings together, being responsible for them, and where his property rights will be observed by other members of the family. If he cannot have a playroom indoors, perhaps he can have part of a room, with plenty of sun and fresh air, where he can play undisturbed, and out of the way of others.





There will be some clutter, certainly, and there will be noise, and a few catastrophes -- but what of that? The catastrophes won't amount to much, if they are not magnified.

At Christmas time, as everyone knows, the stores are full of toys of every kind and description, large and small, expensive and cheap, artistic and ugly, some with a real value, some worthless, and some even harmful. We must use the greatest care in choosing the toys which will be of real worth, for the child for whom they are intended.

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Now -- where's my menu? If I've lost that, we'll have to scare up a dinner on the spur of the moment. Here it is -- we're safe: Roast Stuffed Breast of Lamb with Onions; Scalloped Parsnips; Mint Jelly; Celery; and Apple Compote.

If you have been laboring under the delusion that Breast of Lamb is good only for stews, you'll have to change your mind. I did. This dish is a cheap cut, so prepared that it goes a long way, and is really a company dish. Breast of Lamb is excellent, when roasted and stuffed, served with onions, and brown gravy. Full details for making this dish are given in the Lamb Leaflet, on page 7.

The recipe for Scalloped Parsnips is in the Radio Cookbook. (NOTE: If there is time, broadcast recipe for Scalloped Parsnips, page 20, "Aunt Sammy's Radio Recipes.")

The next recipe, Apple Compote, is not in the cookbook, but I'll give it to you now. A very good recipe, for a very pretty dessert. Seven ingredients, for Apple Compote:

6 tart apples	Red coloring or red cinnamon candies
2 cups sugar	Tart Jelly
2 cups water	Hard Sauce, and
	1/8 Teaspoon salt.

Seven ingredients: (Repeat)

Select tart apples, that will hold their shape when cooked. Make a sirup of the sugar and water. Add the red coloring, or red cinnamon candies, and the salt. The pan should be large enough to hold the desired quantity of apples. Core and pare the apples. Put them in the sirup and cover. Simmer until tender when pierced with a straw, and drain. Place at once on plates for serving, fill the centers with a tart jelly, and add a spoonful of hard sauce on the top. If the hard sauce is not desired, grated cocconut or chopped nuts may be sprinkled over the top. Or the apples may be served cold with whipped cream. The sirup may be used in fruit drinks, or more added to it and another lot of apples cooked in it.

To repeat the menu: Roast Stuffed Breast of Lamb with Onions; Scalloped Parsnips; Mint Jelly; Celery; and Apple Compote.

Monday: "Christmas Confections."

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